

BIBLE STUDY GUIDE + STREAMING VIDEO

SIX SESSIONS

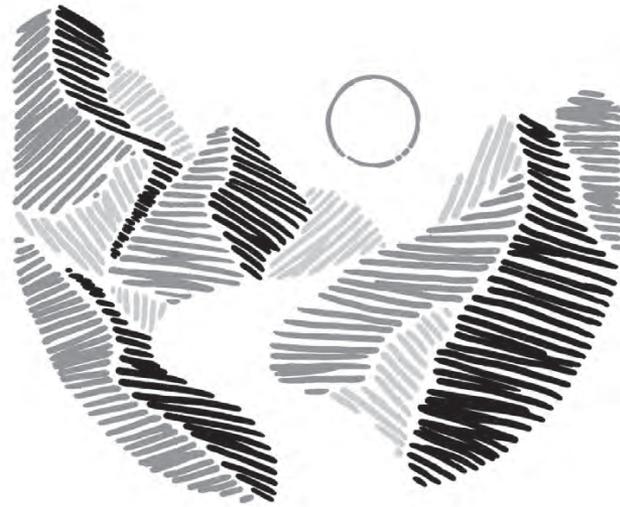
FINDING PEACE THROUGH HUMILITY

A BIBLE STUDY IN THE BOOK OF JUDGES



JOEL MUDDAMALLE

FINDING PEACE THROUGH HUMILITY



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JOEL MUDDAMALLE

WITH REBECCA ENGLISH LAWSON



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Finding Peace Through Humility Bible Study Guide
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A NOTE FROM JOEL

I hate being lost and losing my way. It leaves me disoriented, and honestly, it can be a really scary feeling to not know where you are. Today, we have modern tools like smartphones that give us maps and directions at our fingertips. But before that technology was available, one of the most vital tools that people used to keep from getting lost was a compass.

A compass shows us which direction we should go and keeps us from going where we should not. God’s Word is a type of compass. It points us to where Jesus is and reveals when we start to falter, or get distracted, or are going in a direction that will take us away from him. Yet a compass is only good if we use it. If we fail to keep our focus on it, we will lose our way.

In the book of Judges, we discover this happening to the Israelites. In the days of Moses and Joshua, the people kept their focus on God—their “compass”—and experienced peace. They lived in safety, security, and stability . . . constantly being reminded that the God who had saved them from Egypt would protect them now. This was a peace that came from humility.

But then the Israelites lost their focus on God. They did evil in his sight and worshiped the pagan gods of the peoples around them. This angered the Lord, and “he sold them to the enemies around them, and they could no longer resist their enemies” (Judges 2:14). When the people of Israel lost their humility, they also lost their peace.

The author of Judges frequently reminded his readers that the events of his book took place when “there was no king in Israel” and “everyone did whatever seemed right to him” (Judges 17:6). I want this statement to be an anchor in our minds as we work through this study. Things fell into this state of affairs because the

Israelites had rejected their sovereign King, the Lord God, and chose to do what they thought right in their own eyes.

Before Joshua died, he had challenged the Israelites: “If it doesn’t please you to worship the LORD, choose for yourselves today: Which will you worship—the gods your ancestors worshiped beyond the Euphrates River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living? As for me and my family, we will worship the LORD” (Joshua 24:15). We read that at that time, the people promised to follow the Lord. But ultimately, they failed to keep their word.

The question Joshua asked the Israelites is the same question God is asking us today: “Where will your allegiance be? Will it be to counterfeit helpers that provide no help at all? Or will you bend your knee in humility to me, the King of the cosmos, who created you?” Jesus is the King of heaven and earth, the Creator of the cosmos. When we reject him, we are exhibiting pride. But when we recognize our need of a King and focus on him, we are rooted in humility.

Humility . . . that’s what we’re going to unpack in this study. Humility may not be what we expected, but it’s what we need to experience the peace we all long for.

— JOEL MUDDAMALLE, PhD

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

When the Israelites lost their focus on God and began serving the false gods of other nations, they fell into a cycle of sin, judgment, remorse, and deliverance. This cycle was like a spiral hurtling them down into utter destruction and defeat, with God sending judges again and again to bail the people out, only for them to fall into sin again. This tragedy didn't have to happen.

Something is hiding in plain sight throughout the pages of Judges: God's desire for his people to pursue and live out humility. A constant posture of humility would have helped them break the cycle of sin and remind them to turn to God, who is the source of lasting peace.

In this Bible study, we will see that the same is true for us. God wants us to be free of the trouble and chaos that is caused by our sin and pride. We find that peace when we choose the path of humility. When we lose our focus on our King, we spiral into the same cycle of chaos the Israelites experienced when they turned to foreign gods. But if we keep our focus on Jesus, realizing that his life alone will sustain and guide us, we will walk in his peace.

Before you begin this study, keep in mind there are a few ways you can go through this material. You can experience the study with others in a small group (such as a Bible study, Sunday school class, or home group), or you may choose to go through the content on your own. Either way, the videos for each session are available for you to view at any time by following the instructions provided with this study guide.

GROUP STUDY

Each session is divided into two parts: (1) a group study section and (2) a personal study section. The group study section provides a basic framework on how to open your time together, get the most out of the video content, and discuss the key ideas together that were presented in the teaching. Each session includes the following:

- **Welcome:** A short note about the topic of the session for you to read on your own before you meet as a group.
- **Connect:** A few icebreaker questions to get you and your group members thinking about the topic and interacting with each other.
- **Watch:** An outline of the key points covered in each video teaching to help you follow along, stay engaged, and take notes.
- **Discuss:** Questions to help your group reflect on the teaching material presented and apply it to your lives.
- **Respond:** A short personal exercise to help reinforce the key ideas.
- **Pray:** A place for you to record prayer requests and praises for the week.

If you are doing this study in a group, make sure you have your own copy of this study guide so you can write down your thoughts, responses, and reflections and have access to the videos via streaming. You will also want to have a copy of *The Hidden Peace*, as reading it alongside the curriculum will provide you with deeper insights. (See the notes at the beginning of each group session and personal study section on which chapters of the book you should read before the next group session.) Finally, keep these points in mind:

- **Facilitation:** If you are doing this study in a group, you will want to appoint someone to serve as a facilitator. This person will be responsible for starting the video and keeping track of time during discussions and activities. If *you* have been chosen for this role, there are some resources in the back of this guide that can help you lead your group through the study.
- **Faithfulness:** Your group is a place where tremendous growth can happen as you reflect on the Bible, ask questions, and learn what God is doing in other people's lives. For this reason, be fully committed and attend each session so you can build trust and rapport with the other members.
- **Friendship:** The goal of any small group is to serve as a place where people can share, learn about God, and build friendships. So seek to make your group a safe place. Be honest about your thoughts and feelings, but also listen carefully to everyone else's thoughts, feelings, and opinions. Keep anything personal that your group members share in confidence so that you can create a community where people can heal, be challenged, and grow spiritually.

If you are going through this study on your own, read the opening Welcome section and reflect on the questions in the Connect section. Watch the video and use the prompts provided to take notes. Finally, personalize the questions and exercises in the Discuss and Respond sections. Close by recording any requests you want to pray about during the week.

PERSONAL STUDY

The personal study is for you to work through on your own during the week. Each exercise is designed to help you explore the key ideas you uncovered during your group time and delve into passages of Scripture that will help you apply those principles to your life. Go at your own pace, doing a little each day—or tackle the material all at once. Remember to spend a few moments in silence to listen to whatever the Holy Spirit might be saying to you.

Each section contains three personal studies that open with a brief devotion for you to read, a few passages for you to look up, and several reflection questions to help you apply the truths of God’s Word to your life. Following this, there is a Connect & Discuss page with several questions for you to answer with a friend, either over a phone call or a cup of coffee. Finally, the Catch Up & Read Ahead page will give you a chance to finish any uncompleted personal studies and read the upcoming chapters in *The Hidden Peace*.

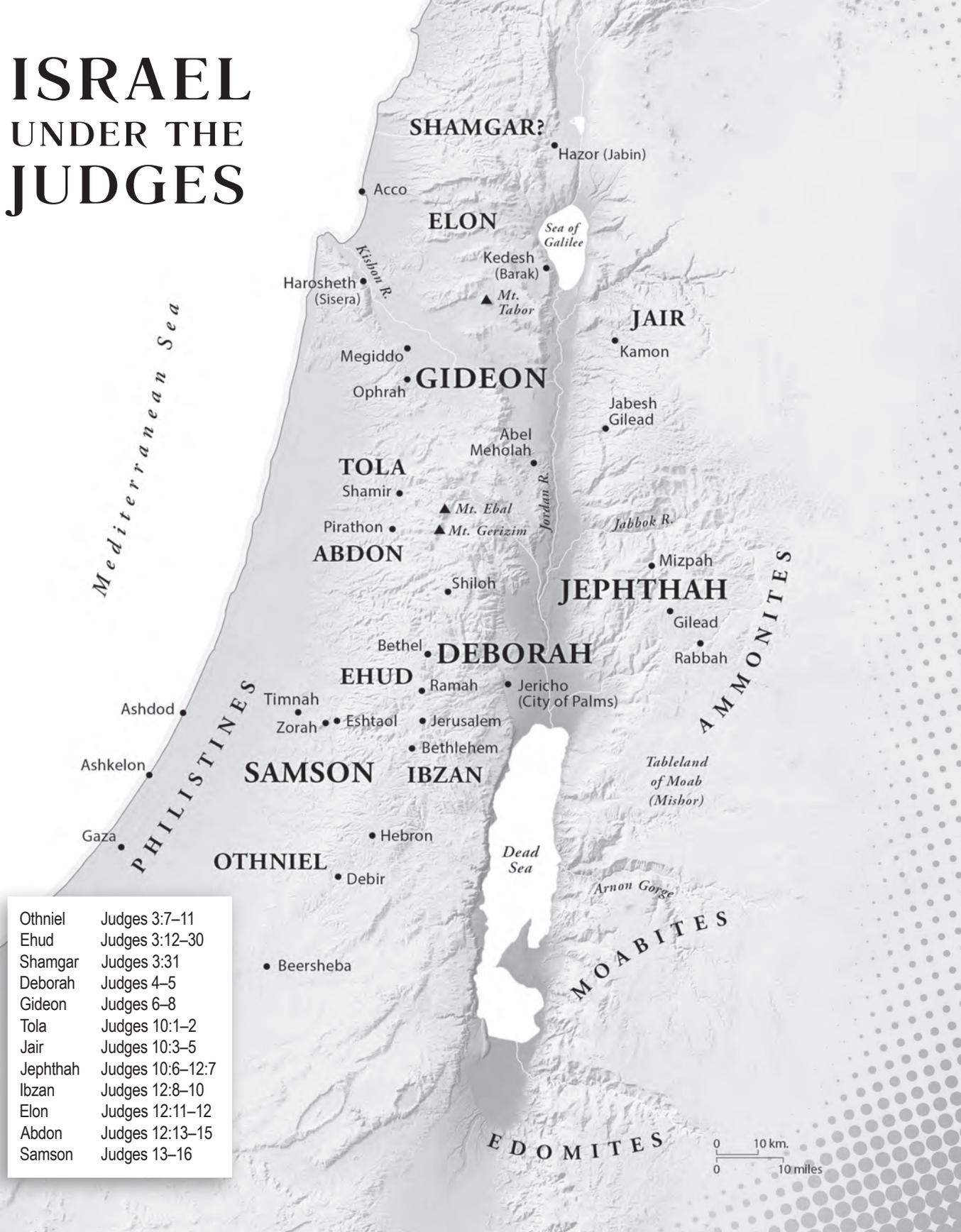
Note that if you are doing this study as part of a group and are unable to finish (or even start) these personal studies for the week, you should still attend the group time. Be assured that you are wanted and welcome even if you don’t have your “homework” done. The group and personal studies are intended to help you hear what God wants you to hear and learn how to apply it to your life. So as you go through this study, be listening for what God has to say to you about how humility brings peace. Whether you walk through good times or bad, when you focus on Jesus, you will experience the peace of God that will guard your heart and mind.



*When arrogance comes, disgrace follows,
but with humility comes wisdom.*

PROVERBS 11:2

ISRAEL UNDER THE JUDGES



Othniel	Judges 3:7–11
Ehud	Judges 3:12–30
Shamgar	Judges 3:31
Deborah	Judges 4–5
Gideon	Judges 6–8
Tola	Judges 10:1–2
Jair	Judges 10:3–5
Jephthah	Judges 10:6–12:7
Ibzan	Judges 12:8–10
Elon	Judges 12:11–12
Abdon	Judges 12:13–15
Samson	Judges 13–16

WEEK 1

BEFORE GROUP MEETING	Read chapters 1-2 in <i>The Hidden Peace</i> Read the Welcome section (page 2)
GROUP MEETING	Discuss the Connect questions Watch the video teaching for session 1 Discuss the questions that follow as a group Do the closing exercise and pray (pages 2-6)
STUDY 1	Complete the personal study (pages 9-11)
STUDY 2	Complete the personal study (pages 12-14)
STUDY 3	Complete the personal study (pages 15-17)
CONNECT & DISCUSS	Connect with someone in your group (page 18)
CATCH UP & READ AHEAD (BEFORE WEEK 2 GROUP MEETING)	Read chapters 3-5 in <i>The Hidden Peace</i> Complete any unfinished personal studies (page 19)

SESSION ONE



STUCK IN THE CYCLE

*In those days there was no king in Israel;
everyone did whatever seemed right to him.*

JUDGES 17:6

WELCOME | READ ON YOUR OWN

None of us likes to have chaos in our lives. We don't want to experience the tension, anxiety, fear, and all the other unpleasant emotions and realities that chaos can bring. We would rather enjoy peace.

The people of Israel desired peace . . . and God had promised they could have it if they followed his commands. But instead, during the time of the judges, the people often fell away from God and slipped into idolatry. As a result, God would send judgment against them in the form of an enemy nation to harass and oppress them. The Israelites, reeling from their pain, would remember the Lord and cry out to him, and God would faithfully send judges to lead them out of trouble and back to himself, where they could find peace. This happened again and again.

Why did the Israelites constantly fall out of peace and back into chaos? Because they kept rejecting the Lord God—their one and only King. They wanted to be like the peoples around them, and they wanted the perceived security of the other nations' gods. So they allowed things like fear, ambition, and pain to drive their decisions. But at the bottom of all this was *pride*. God had told them how to live and provided them with his guidance. Yet they drifted away from him because they thought they knew better.

God wants us to live in peace—and we do this through humility. When we realize that we need a King and surrender ourselves to him, he will fill us with his rest.

CONNECT | 15 MINUTES

If any of your group members don't know each other, take a few minutes to introduce yourselves. Then, to get things started, discuss one of the following questions:

- What is your primary goal or hope for participating in this study? (In other words, why are you here?)

— or —

- What is one thing that causes you to lose your sense of peace?

WATCH | 20 MINUTES

Now watch the video for this session, which you can access by playing the DVD or through streaming (see the instructions provided with this study guide). As you watch, use the following outline to record any thoughts or concepts that stand out to you.

OUTLINE

- I. God's Word is a compass for our lives that always points us toward Jesus.
 - A. Humility enables us to be led by the Scriptures and makes us aware when we get distracted and start to go to places that we should not go.
 - B. God served as a compass for the Israelites. He led them out of Egypt and made his presence known through a pillar of fire by night and pillar of cloud by day.
 - C. God led them safely through the Red Sea—an image of chaos—and closed the waters on the pursuing Egyptians. He eventually led them into the promised land.
- II. The Israelites, in the promised land, lost their focus on God after Joshua's death.
 - A. The people's awareness of God was the framework that established humility in their lives. As long as they kept their focus on the Lord, they experienced his peace.
 - B. Humility is what flows out of us when we see God as he truly is and see ourselves in light of who God is—which then helps us to see others as God does.
 - C. The Israelites exchanged their focus, attention, and affection for God with the false gods of the Canaanites. When this happened, they lost their peace.
- III. We need to connect the dots on who these gods were and what they represented.
 - A. Baal was the god of thunder and lightning who provided water and rain for crops. The temptation for the Israelites was to pray to him to secure a successful harvest.
 - B. Ishtar was the war goddess. The temptation for the Israelites was to pray to her for success in battle if the odds seemed to not be stacked in their favor.
 - C. Dagon was a fish deity and Ashtoreth was a fertility goddess. The temptation for the Israelites was to pray to these deities for food and for offspring.
 - D. Counterfeit gods are still present today. They just wear different masks, like social media, money, resources, family, vocation, education, and accomplishments.
- IV. Judges frequently states that there was no king in Israel (see 17:6; 18:1; 19:1; 21:25).
 - A. Joshua gave the people a choice: God or idols. The people ultimately chose idols.
 - B. The cycle of the Israelites' sin: (1) they turned from God; (2) God responded with judgment; (3) they cried out for mercy; (4) God delivered them through judges.
 - C. A constant posture of humility would have enabled the Israelites to break free of this cycle of sin and would have reminded them to turn their focus back to God.

DISCUSS | 35 MINUTES

Now discuss what you just watched by answering the following questions.

1. A compass guides us, and if we look to it, it can lead us to our destination. But if we lose focus on it, or focus on the wrong part of it, things will spiral out of control. How was this true in the Israelites' case after the death of Joshua?
2. God had miraculously delivered his people out of Egypt, led them in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, and made a way for them to safely pass through the Red Sea. Yet even though God had guided the Israelites so miraculously, the people gradually forgot him. How does such a loss of focus on God and a loss of humility go hand in hand?
3. Consider this definition of *humility* from this week's teaching: "Humility is what flows out of us when we see God as he truly is and see ourselves in light of who God is—which then helps us to see others as God does." How does seeing God accurately enable you to see yourself more honestly? How does this affect your relationships with others?
4. When the Israelites lost their focus on God, they actually *exchanged* their focus on him for something else that was false. What were some of the false gods the Israelites chose to serve—and why? What are some counterfeit gods that people serve today?
5. "In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did whatever seemed right to him" (Judges 17:6). What did the author of Judges mean by making this statement? How would humility and reverence toward God have broken the Israelites out of their cycle of sin?

RESPOND | 10 MINUTES

Before his death, Joshua gave a speech in which he reminded the Israelites of God's faithfulness. He then gave them a choice: worship God, or follow idols (see Joshua 24:14-15). Sadly, when we come to the book of Judges, we find that the people ultimately chose idols, which led to a cycle of sin, judgment, remorse, and deliverance. Fortunately, we don't have to end up the same! Take a few minutes on your own to consider what might be tempting *you* to take your focus off God. Use the following questions to help guide you in this reflection.

What one thing most distracts you from keeping your focus on God?

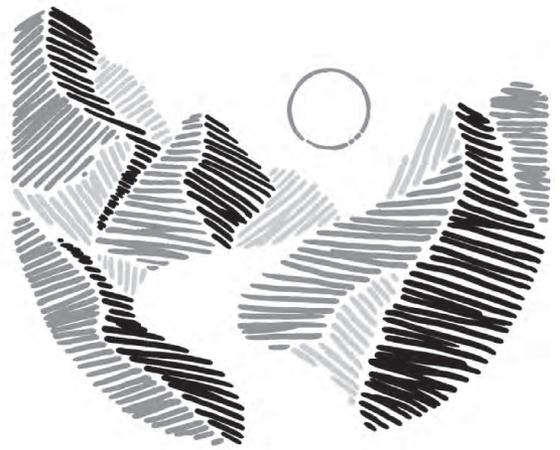
Why do you think that particular issue is tripping you up?

What do you sense God is prompting you to do to address this problem?

PRAY | 10 MINUTES

Praying for one another is one of the most important things you can do as a community. So use this prayer time wisely, and make it more than just a "closing prayer" to end your group experience. Be intentional about sharing your prayer requests, reviewing how God is answering your prayers, and praying for each other as a group. As you pray, ask God to help you walk in humility before him and keep you from the cycle of sin and chaos that the Israelites modeled. Before you close your session, write down any requests so that you and your fellow group members can continue to pray about them in the week ahead.

SESSION ONE



PERSONAL STUDY

As you heard during the group time, God’s Word is like a compass that points you “due north” to Jesus. But when you fail to focus on Jesus and instead focus on the things of this world, your heart and mind end up disturbed and unsettled. This week, you will have the opportunity to look at a few verses to see what the Bible says about why the Israelites kept spiraling into chaos and how you can avoid the same fate. As you consider these passages, ask God to reveal what he wants you to learn. He has something specific for you to take away from this study! Be sure to write down your responses as you work through these questions, as you will be given a few minutes to share your insights if you are doing this study with a group. If you are reading *The Hidden Peace* alongside this study, first review chapters 1-2 in the book.



STUDY 1

FOLLOW THE LEADER

Imagine the scene: thousands and thousands of people—along with their cattle, carts, and everything they own—are following Moses into the wilderness to escape slavery in Egypt.¹ The Lord has guided them through a desert to the edge of the Red Sea. But now, in a horrifying turn of events, the king of Egypt and his army have been seen approaching the people’s location. The Israelites are trapped. They cry out to Moses, “Why did you bring us out here to die?”

Most of us have felt trapped at one time or another in our lives. We have all endured seasons in which it felt like no matter what we did, we couldn’t seem to make progress and move ahead. For some of us, these seasons were mercifully short. For others, these seasons stretched on for months and even years. There were times when things looked hopeless.

When we are boxed in, the last thing that we think about is humility. Much like the Israelites at the Red Sea, we tend to panic and blame the people who we think led us into the jam that we are facing. We lose our faith in God and complain that there is no way out.

But think about it for a moment. The Bible is clear that it was *God* who led the Israelites to that impossible place. And God had the answer to their problem—an answer they couldn’t see because it was supernatural. But the people had to exercise humility and trust in God. Moses told the people, “The LORD will fight for you, and you must be quiet” (Exodus 14:14). Instead of panicking, they needed to get still and be humble before the Lord.

The Lord has the answer to our problems as well. He can take us out of any situation in which we are feeling stuck. He may not open up a path through the sea like he did for the Israelites, but he will definitely lead us out of chaos and into his peace. But first, we have to still ourselves before God, trust in his provision, and humbly allow him to lead us forward.

READ | Exodus 14:1–31; Psalm 46:1–11; Psalm 77:19–20

REFLECT

1. When is a time in your life that you were trapped by circumstances and felt as if you had no way out?
2. What do you tend to do first when you can't see an answer to your situation? Do you respond in panic? If so, how do the words of Exodus 14:13-14 help you?

We were created with innate humility in our hearts, so if we lose humility, we actually lose part of God's design for humanity. When we live in a way that is inconsistent with how God designed us to live (humble), there is an incongruity between who we are and who we are meant to be. In other words, we struggle to live out what God intended for us. God created humanity in his image, which gives us intrinsic worth and value.²

3. What does it mean that "we were created with innate humility in our hearts"? How does *not* being humble keep you from handling life the way God intends you to handle it?

The promise of Psalm 46 is the presence of the King in the midst of our fear—the King who personally walks us through our pain. We have a Battle Leader. He will meet us in our panic moments, our living nightmares, and bring his power into the picture. All eleven verses of Psalm 46 can encourage our fearful hearts as they assure us that God is in total control over all things. The psalmist breaks it up into three categories: God is in control over nature (verses 1-3), over our enemies (verses 4-7), and over the entire world that is in war and chaos (verses 8-11).³

4. Review each of these three categories of God’s control in Psalm 46. In the box below, write down how the psalmist’s words about control over those areas provides you with peace.

God is in control over nature (verses 1-3).	
God is in control over those who would seek to do you harm (verses 4-7).	
God is in control over the entire world that is in war and chaos (verses 8-11).	

5. Psalm 77:19-20 says that God’s footprints are “unseen.” How does it comfort you to know that God already has a way out of your dilemma—even before you see it?

PRAY | End your time in prayer. Thank God that he is a faithful leader, and ask him to help you quietly and humbly trust his guidance.

STUDY 2

DON'T LOSE YOUR FOCUS!

Have you ever been distracted by what you thought was a small temptation, only to find yourself tangled up in a big mess? The Israelites did—again and again.

First, they would succumb to the temptation to turn to false gods like Baal, Ishtar, or Ashtoreth to provide rain, success in battle, and children. This would lead to the people doing evil in God's sight, and the Lord would respond by executing his judgment. This led to the Israelites crying out to God for mercy. The Lord would hear their prayers and send a deliverer in the form of a judge. Sadly, once that judge died, the people would start all over, turning again from God to idols.

It's easy to fall into this cycle. When our focus on Jesus slips and we get distracted, it can turn even good things into god-type things. We prioritize social media, money, career, education, friends, or even family over God—and it becomes idolatry. As we heard in this week's teaching, "Whatever we long for, we will look for, and it will eventually become what we love." Loving other things above Jesus waters down our love for him. When we finally wake up and cry out to the Lord, he helps us—and then we are tempted by the same things again.

How do we keep our focus on God instead of being constantly pulled into the cycle of sin? It is found in humility. Humility makes us aware of our destructive patterns. Humility positions us for rescue from temptation and ensures our peace. If the Israelites had just adopted a constant posture of humility, they would have avoided the cycle of sin. The same is true for us, as James 4:6 makes clear: "God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble."

READ | Judges 2:11-19; James 4:6-10; Proverbs 16:18

REFLECT

1. In the following list, put a check beside any item that tends to draw your focus away from God. In the space that follows, write down how being drawn away from the Lord by one of these things has affected your life.

social media

career

friends

money

education

family

2. Review Judges 2:11-19. What were some of the things the Israelites did to perpetuate the cycle of sin . . . even while God was showing them mercy by giving them judges to help them? How does this reveal an attitude of pride?

I want to invite you to come and see how God alone can grant us the peace we long and hope for. But before we can get into that, we need some honest exploration. . . . To be honest, things may get difficult as we face longings of our hearts that need reorientation. But all of this, I promise you, is good. . . . Typically, in order to get to the good, we need to go through some hard.⁴

3 ■ God is the only one who can give us the peace that we so desire. So why do you think that so many people today look for peace in so many other places?

4 ■ The letter of James is filled with teachings that we might consider to be “hard” in order to get us to God’s greater “good” for our lives. What to you is the most reassuring statement found in James 4:6-10? How will it help you keep your focus on Jesus?

One way or another, you and I have tried to take things into our own hands and, in so doing, we’ve viewed humility as unwanted and unnecessary. Yet amid all our angst and fear and opposition to humility, *it is actually humility that will move us forward*, into the life we’re longing for.⁵

5 ■ “Pride comes before destruction, and an arrogant spirit before a fall” (Proverbs 16:18). How does a spirit of humility before God keep us off the path of destruction? How does humility actually move us *forward* into the life that we are longing to receive from God?

PRAY | End your time in prayer. Thank God for his willingness to rescue you from the cycle of sin. Ask him to give you a continual posture of humility.

STUDY 3

THE UNEXPECTED ANSWER

As noted in this week's teaching, before Joshua died, he challenged the people of Israel to choose God over idols. They replied, "We will certainly not abandon the LORD to worship other gods!" (Joshua 24:16). Sadly, their good intentions failed. After Joshua and the elders who outlived him died, "another generation rose up who did not know the LORD or the works he had done for Israel" (Judges 2:10).

The author of Judges shed some light on this period in Israel's history: "In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did whatever seemed right to him" (17:6). In addition to stating that Israel had no physical king at this time, the verse also implies that Israel had rejected God as king. The people refused to humble themselves before God and instead exalted themselves, which, as we will see throughout Judges, led to continual sin and judgment.

Humility was the unexpected answer to the people's troubles. While the word *humility* doesn't show up in the pages of the book, it is hiding all over the text in plain sight. If the people of Israel had only humbled themselves before God, they would have avoided the cycle of sin and enjoyed the peace God intended them to have.

The church father Augustine once wrote the following to a student: "I desire you to submit yourself with unreserved piety, and I wish you to prepare for yourself no other way of seizing and holding the truth than that which has been prepared by Him who, as God, saw the weakness of our goings. In that way the first part is humility; the second, humility; the third, humility: and this I would continue to repeat as often as you might ask direction, not that there are no other instructions which may be given, but because, unless humility precede, accompany, and follow every good action which we perform, being at once the object which we keep before our eyes, the support to which we cling, and the monitor by which we are restrained, pride wrests wholly from our hand any good work on which we are congratulating ourselves."⁶

Humility may not be what we expect when it comes to dealing with the chaos in our lives. But if we truly want God's peace, it's what we need.

READ | Joshua 24:14-28; Judges 2:7-10; Proverbs 11:2; Romans 12:3-8

REFLECT

1. In Joshua 24:14-28, we see the people had every intention of worshiping the Lord and obeying him alone. When is a time that you likewise promised to love and serve God in some way but failed to follow through on your intentions? As you reflect on that moment, what caused you to fail to follow through?

2. According to Judges 2:7-10, the people faithfully served God throughout Joshua's lifetime. How do you think Joshua was able to keep the people focused on the Lord and away from idols? What did he and the people of that day "know" about God?

3. According to Proverbs 11:2, what does arrogance, or pride, produce? What does humility bring? How have you seen this at work in your own life?

[You may think] humility is a threat that will squash down your strengths and potential. I want to show you that it's actually a gift that helps the best of who we are flourish. You may think it will leave you unstable and weak. I want to show you it will actually make you steady and strong. . . . I need humility because, honestly, I've tried everything else, and none of it has worked.⁷

4. Do you view humility as a threat or a gift? In the boxes below, list some ways that humility might feel like a threat to you and some ways that it could actually be a gift in your life.

Humility as a Threat	Humility as a Gift

If we think too highly of ourselves, we'll view every relationship through the lens of opportunity. We'll see every person as a pawn on a chessboard for us to move around and even sacrifice for our own benefit. When we receive praise, we will fall into an addictive cycle of desiring it and trying to absorb it until it eventually crushes us. We were never designed to absorb the praise of others; we were designed to pour out praise onto God.⁸

5. What did Paul write in Romans 12:3-8 about the need for humility in the body of Christ? What happens when one "part" gets out of alignment with the rest?

PRAY | End your time in prayer. Ask God to grow in you his gift of humility—through whatever means he chooses. Thank him for the peace it will bring.

CONNECT & DISCUSS

Take time today to connect with a group member and talk about some of the insights from this session. Use any of the prompts below to help guide your discussion.

What is one new thing you learned this week about being humble before God?

How did the challenge not to panic but rather to be quiet before God help you?

What is one change you can make to help you better focus on God and guard against exchanging that focus for something else?

Augustine wrote that humility must “precede, accompany, and follow every good action.” What happens when humility is not at the root of our actions?

In what area would you like to grow as you seek God’s peace through humility?

CATCH UP & READ AHEAD

Use this time to go back and complete any of the study and reflection questions from previous days that you weren't able to finish. Make a note below of any questions you've had and reflect on any growth or personal insights you've gained.

Read chapters 3-5 in *The Hidden Peace* before the next group session. Use the space below to make note of anything that stands out to you or encourages you.

WEEK 2

BEFORE GROUP MEETING	Read chapters 3-5 in <i>The Hidden Peace</i> Read the Welcome section (page 22)
GROUP MEETING	Discuss the Connect questions Watch the video teaching for session 2 Discuss the questions that follow as a group Do the closing exercise and pray (pages 22-26)
STUDY 1	Complete the personal study (pages 29-31)
STUDY 2	Complete the personal study (pages 32-34)
STUDY 3	Complete the personal study (page 35-37)
CONNECT & DISCUSS	Connect with someone in your group (page 38)
CATCH UP & READ AHEAD (BEFORE WEEK 3 GROUP MEETING)	Read chapters 6-7 in <i>The Hidden Peace</i> Complete any unfinished personal studies (page 39)



LEADER'S GUIDE

Thank you for your willingness to lead your group through this study! What you have chosen to do is valuable and will make a great difference in the lives of others. The rewards of being a leader are different from those of participating in a group, and we hope that as you lead, you will discover new insights into what it means to be humble and how humility can help bring about God's peace in your life.

Finding Peace Through Humility is a six-session Bible study built around video content and small-group interaction. As the group leader, imagine yourself as the host of a party. Your job is to take care of your guests by managing the details so that when your guests arrive, they can focus on one another and on the interaction around the topic for that session.

Your role as the group leader is not to answer all the questions or reteach the content—the video, book, and study guide will do most of that work. Your job is to guide the experience and cultivate your small group into a connected and engaged community. This will make it a place for members to process, question, and reflect—not necessarily to receive more instruction.

There are several elements in this leader's guide that will help you as you structure your study and reflection time, so be sure to take advantage of each one.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Before your first meeting, make sure the group members have a copy of this study guide. Alternately, you can hand out the study guides at your first meeting and give the members some time to look over the material and ask any preliminary questions. Also, make sure that the group members are aware that they have access to the streaming videos at any time by following the instructions provided with this guide. During your first meeting, ask the members to provide their names, phone numbers, and email addresses so that you can keep in touch with them.

Generally, the ideal size for a group is eight to ten people, which will ensure that everyone has enough time to participate in discussions. If you have more people, you might want to break up the main group into smaller subgroups. Encourage those who show up at the first meeting to commit to attending the duration of the

study, as this will help the group members get to know one another, create stability for the group, and help you know how best to prepare to lead the participants through the material.

Each of the sessions in *Finding Peace Through Humility* begins with an opening reflection in the Welcome section. The questions that follow in the Connect section serve as an icebreaker to get the group members thinking about the session topic. In the rest of the study, it's generally not a good idea to have everyone answer every question—a free-flowing discussion is more desirable. But with the icebreaker question, you can go around the circle and ask each person to respond. Encourage shy people to share, but don't force them.

At your first meeting, let the group members know that each session also contains a personal study section that they can use to continue to engage with the content until the next meeting. While doing this section is optional, it will help participants cement the concepts presented during the group study time and help them better understand how humility will help them see God, themselves, and others more accurately.

Let them know that if they choose to do so, they can watch the video for the next session by accessing the streaming code provided with this study guide. Invite them to bring any questions and insights to your next meeting, especially if they had a breakthrough moment or didn't understand something.

PREPARATION FOR EACH SESSION

There are a few things that you should do to best prepare for each meeting:

- **Read through the session.** This will help you become more familiar with the content and know how to structure the discussion times.
- **Decide how the videos will be used.** Determine whether you want the members to watch the videos ahead of time (again, via the streaming access code provided with this study guide) or together as a group.
- **Decide which questions you want to discuss.** Based on the length of your group discussions, you may not be able to get through all the questions. So look over the discussion questions provided in each session and mark which ones you definitely want to cover.

- **Be familiar with the questions you want to discuss.** When the group meets, you'll be watching the clock, so make sure you are familiar with the questions you have selected. In this way you will ensure that you have the material more deeply in your mind than your group members.
- **Pray for your group.** Pray for your group members and ask God to lead them as they study his Word and listen to his Spirit.

Keep in mind as you lead the discussion times that in many cases there will be no one “right” answer to the questions. Answers will vary, especially when the group members are being asked to share their personal experiences.

STRUCTURING THE DISCUSSION TIME

You will need to determine with your group how long you want your meetings to last so that you can plan your time accordingly. Suggested times for each section have been provided in this study guide, and if you adhere to these times, your group will meet for ninety minutes. However, many groups like to meet for two hours. If this describes your particular group, you can follow the times listed in the right-hand column of the chart below:

Section	90 Minutes	120 Minutes
CONNECT (discuss one or more of the opening questions for the session)	15 minutes	20 minutes
WATCH (watch the teaching material together and take notes)	20 minutes	20 minutes
DISCUSS (discuss the study questions you selected ahead of time)	35 minutes	50 minutes
RESPOND (write down key takeaways)	10 minutes	15 minutes
PRAY (pray together and dismiss)	10 minutes	15 minutes

As the group leader, it is up to you to keep track of the time and to keep things on schedule. You might want to set a timer for each segment so that both you and the group members know when the time is up. (There are some good phone apps for timers that play a gentle chime or other pleasant sound instead of a disruptive noise.)

Don't be concerned if group members are quiet or slow to share. People are often quiet when they are pulling together their ideas, and this might be a new experience for some of them. Just ask a question, and let it hang in the air until someone shares. You can then say, "Thank you. What about others? What came to you when you watched that portion of the teaching?"

GROUP DYNAMICS

Leading a group through *Finding Peace Through Humility* will prove to be highly rewarding both to you and your group members. But you still may encounter challenges along the way! Discussions can get off track. Group members may not be sensitive to the needs and ideas of others. Some might worry that they will be expected to talk about matters that make them feel awkward. Others may express comments that result in disagreements. To help ease this strain on you and the group, consider the following ground rules:

- When someone raises a question or comment that is off the main topic, suggest you deal with it another time, or, if you feel led to go in that direction, let the group know that you will be spending some time discussing it.
- If someone asks a question that you don't know how to answer, admit it, and move on. At your discretion, feel free to invite group members to comment on questions that call for personal experience.
- If you find that one or two people are dominating the discussion time, direct a few questions to others in the group. Outside the main group time, ask the more dominating members to help you draw out the quieter ones. Work to make them part of the solution instead of part of the problem.
- When a disagreement occurs, encourage the group members to process the matter in love. Encourage those on opposite sides to restate what they heard the other side say about the matter, and then invite each side to

evaluate if that perception is accurate. Lead the group in examining other scriptures related to the topic and look for common ground.

When any of these issues arise, encourage your group members to follow these words from Scripture: “Love one another” (John 13:34); “If possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone” (Romans 12:18); “Whatever is true . . . honorable . . . just . . . pure . . . lovely . . . if there is anything praiseworthy—dwell on these things” (Philippians 4:8); and, “Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to anger” (James 1:19). This will make your group time more rewarding and beneficial for everyone who attends.

Thank you again for taking the time to lead your group. You are making a difference in your group members' lives and having an impact on their journey toward a better understanding of how growing in humility will bring about peace with God that will last for eternity.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



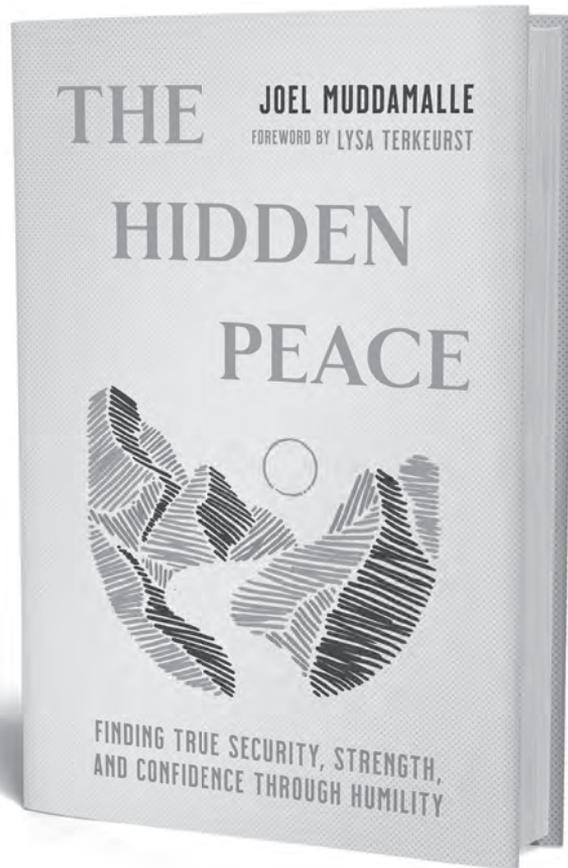
Joel Muddamalle, holding a PhD in Theology, is the Director of Theology and Research at Proverbs 31 Ministries with Lysa TerKeurst and the theologian in residence for Haven Place Ministries, a ministry of Lysa's that provides personalized theology and therapy retreats and smaller gatherings. He also cohosts the popular podcast *Therapy and Theology* with Lysa and licensed counselor Jim Cress.

Joel serves on the preaching team at Transformation Church in Indian Land, SC, with Pastor Derwin Gray and is a frequent speaker for conferences and events (SheSpeaks, IF:Gathering, THINQ Media's Nxt Gen Summit, Hope Heals Camp). One of his favorite things to do is lead in-depth theology workshops and training seminars for churches (FreshLife, Passion City, Transformation Church).

Joel coauthored *30 Days with Seeing* and has had the honor of working with Christian authors in developing the theological framework of their books through COMPEL consulting.

Based in Charlotte, NC, Joel and his wife enjoy a full house with their four children and two dogs. If he doesn't have a theology book in his hand, you can be sure he's either coaching one of his kids in a sport, doing his best to keep up his hoops game on the basketball court, or getting roped into a reel by his wife (@almostindianwife).

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“IN THOSE DAYS ISRAEL HAD NO KING; EVERYONE DID AS THEY SAW FIT” –JUDGES 17:6



In truth, the people had a King—the Lord—but they had rejected his authority over their lives. This led to them getting stuck in a cycle of faithlessness, judgment, remorse, deliverance . . . and then faithlessness again. The people lacked *humility*. If only they had recognized God as their King, they could have broken out of the cycle.

In *Finding Peace Through Humility*, theologian Dr. Joel Muddamalle reveals how humility can likewise help us break out of our cycles of sin and experience the peace that God wants us to have. You will discover how to:

- walk through hurtful situations in God-honoring ways by gaining a true understanding of biblical humility;
- gain perspective to trust God when you go through hardships and heartaches; and
- face your fears and see the unlikely and unexpected places in which God is working in your life.

Humility isn't about being passive or a doormat. It's about relying on God's limitless resources and inviting more of his strength and peace into your life.

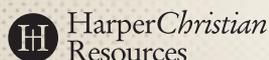
Streaming Video Access Code Included*
Watch on any device DVD also available, sold separately.



This study guide, based on *The Hidden Peace* by Joel Muddamalle, includes:

- Individual access to six streaming video sessions
- A guide to best practices for leading a group
- Video notes and a comprehensive structure for group discussion time
- Personal study for deeper reflection between sessions

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